

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Path to Porto: “Co-operation on security is more important than ever”

New threats call for intensified dialogue and co-operation

On the eve of the Tenth Ministerial Council Meeting in Porto, OSCE Chairman-in-Office Antonio Martins da Cruz took stock of Portugal's Chairmanship of the OSCE. The Foreign Minister discounted fears that the shifting European and transatlantic security structure would result in a diminished role for the Organization. Here are excerpts from his interview with Richard Murphy, Head of Press and Public Information.

What do you think have been the highlights of Portugal's OSCE Chairmanship?

As expected of any Chairmanship, we have been devoting our best efforts to overseeing the efficient management of the OSCE and the smooth development of its many activities. Apart from these important day-to-day operations, the overriding objective of our tenure has been to ensure that the OSCE maintain its vital role in the international arena – both in its traditional area of preventive diplomacy and in the new challenges emerg-



Portuguese Foreign Ministry

Portuguese Foreign Minister Antonio Martins da Cruz, OSCE Chairman-in-Office in 2002



55 foreign ministers to send clear message at Porto:

OSCE has special niche in evolving transatlantic structure

In his interview reflecting on the achievements of the Portuguese Chairmanship, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Foreign Minister Antonio Martins da Cruz of Portugal, shared his hopes and expectations for the Tenth Ministerial Council Meeting, to be held in Porto on 6 and 7 December. The meeting's agenda was discussed by the

OSCE Ministerial Troika in Vienna on 5 November. Present at the talks were Dutch Foreign Minister Jaap De Hoop Scheffer, representing the incoming Chairmanship, and Romanian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Mihnea Motoc, representing the previous one. Excerpts from the remarks of the Chairman-in-Office follow:

There appears to be a unanimity of views among participating States that could lead to the adoption of concise and meaningful documents, setting clear operational guideposts for the OSCE's work in the years to come.

A Porto Ministerial Declaration will enshrine the main political mes-

ing from the ever-changing global security context.

Given the key decisions that will be taken on the institutional arrangements in the European and transatlantic security architecture, the tasks of asserting the OSCE's role and raising its visibility have assumed even more significance this year. Against this background, we have been working to ensure the implementation of the Platform for Co-operative Security [adopted at the Istanbul Summit in November 1999 to strengthen the interaction between organizations and institutions concerned with promoting comprehensive security in the OSCE area].

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sages and the key issues for the OSCE as it moves into 2003. I expect the declaration to clearly reflect the importance we continue to attach to the role and competitive edge of the OSCE in the evolving security environment. We hope that the declaration will have a positive impact on public opinion and on the public profile of the OSCE.

The adoption of the **OSCE Charter on Preventing and Combating Terrorism** is meant to send an eloquent message to our constituencies on the Organization's dynamic contribution to the fight against this scourge.

The OSCE Secretary General will present a **report on the implementation of the Bucharest and Bishkek documents**. To reaffirm the OSCE's resolve, the Portuguese Chairmanship is supporting the adoption of a **decision on the implementation of OSCE commitments on combating terrorism by means of new measures**.

Another concrete demonstration of the OSCE's dynamism will be the adoption of a **decision comprising clear guidelines on a strategy addressing threats to security and stability in the 21st century**, to be approved next year. The strategy will allow us not only to identify a list of threats, but also to conceive a new operational approach to be taken in addressing these threats. The United States and the Russian Federation have prepared a useful paper providing "food for thought" for this exercise.

An area reflecting the OSCE's ability

The prevention of and the fight against terrorism have been assigned the highest priority during our Chairmanship, with activities aimed at implementing the Bucharest Plan of Action for Combating Terrorism [adopted at the Ninth Ministerial Council Meeting in December 2001] and the Bishkek Programme of Action [adopted a few days later at an international conference on security and stability in Central Asia].

We are convinced that the OSCE is well placed to make a valuable contribution to the global strategy being implemented under the leadership of the United Nations. With this in mind, we organized

to adapt is a **package of decisions on reform**. We hope it will be possible to adopt new Financial and Staff Regulations. We also support the adoption of decisions on strengthening the Secretariat, for example, through the establishment of an analytical unit and the enhancement of the role of field missions.

There has also been general support for the adoption of decisions in each dimension of the Organization's work. In the politico-military area, we sense broad support for a decision to hold an **annual security review conference**. This would represent an important mechanism for the OSCE.

In the **economic and environmental sphere**, our efforts should focus on a decision enhancing it. In the human dimension, we are encouraged by progress being made on **decisions on the themes of trafficking in human beings, tolerance and electoral standards**.

The legal capacity of the OSCE is another issue at stake. We would like to see the adoption of a **pragmatic decision that will pave the way for a convention on privileges and immunities**. This would be an important step towards improving the operational capacity of the OSCE, and allowing its missions and institutions to overcome the practical problems posed by the OSCE's lack of an international legal status.

Last but not the least, there will be **declarations on regional issues**.

Overall, preparations for Porto are on track and give us cause for optimism.

– in Lisbon, on 12 June – the first conference bringing together the most senior representatives of the main international and regional organizations involved in combating terrorism. We have already made known our offer to host a follow-up meeting in Portugal next year.

We have also been working on the content of an OSCE charter on preventing and combating terrorism, which will reaffirm

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the enduring norms and values of the OSCE. We regard the adoption of this political document as marking a milestone in OSCE's long experience in drawing up guiding principles in many areas.

Three dimensions

Another focus has been on strengthening each of the three dimensions of the OSCE and improving the balance between them, in line with the mandate assigned to us in Bucharest. We have been devoting a great deal of effort to strengthening the economic and environmental dimension, both in the Secretariat and in the field. The Tenth OSCE Economic Forum, which took place in May in Prague, succeeded in examining a crucial aspect of security: global co-operation in the sustainable use of shared water resources.

Furthermore, we have made every effort to enhance this dimension in the activities carried out by OSCE missions. A number of host countries, mainly in Central Asia, have expressed their expectations that the OSCE would assume a more active role in helping them develop the appropriate framework to consolidate a market economy and encourage foreign investment.

We have been able to facilitate the approval of new mechanisms to revitalize the regular review of activities in the human dimension, the centrepiece of the Organization's work. I had the opportunity to go to Warsaw in September to inaugurate the new arrangements for the implementation meeting in this area, which is organized annually by the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

To strengthen the politico-military dimension, we have been improving the co-ordination between the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation.

OSCE reforms

The reform of the OSCE has been at the top of the Portuguese Chairmanship's agenda. The OSCE, in its present structure is – at seven years old – relatively young. Like other organizations, it should be able to enhance its efficiency and adjust its working procedures and



Romanian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Mihnea Motoc (left) and Dutch Foreign Minister Jaap De Hoop Scheffer at the OSCE Ministerial Troika meeting on 5 November

mechanisms whenever necessary. This year, we saw some important progress on the management of the OSCE: the Permanent Council endorsed decisions to improve the management of the budget, clarify the role of the Chairmanship, set rules for OSCE statements and revitalize public information activities. The participating States also adopted a Standard Scale of Contributions, which is valid until January 2005.

Over the past ten months, the Chairmanship has attempted to conduct business through a process of broad consultations with all the participating States and by encouraging close co-ordination between Vienna and the field missions, as well as among the different OSCE institutions. On the latter point, I would like to call attention to the co-operation with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, which is helping to bring the OSCE closer to the region's citizens.

The OSCE's work in resolving "frozen" conflicts has also been a major concern, especially in Moldova, Nagorno-Karabakh and Georgia. Portugal recently hosted a fruitful meeting at Castelo Branco on the resolution of the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict.

Last but not least, the Chairmanship has

devoted considerable energy to promoting the role of the OSCE in the field. I have just returned from Central Asia and have also had the opportunity to visit a number of missions in south-eastern Europe.

From your vantage point as Chairman-in-Office, what do you believe are the strengths and weaknesses of the OSCE?

Everybody knows the main strengths of the OSCE. They are frequently cited, but often in a mechanical way that does not do justice to their importance. You refer to the Chairman's vantage point, and indeed, we have been fortunate to witness up-close what these strengths really are in practice.

Over the years, the OSCE has proved that it is a flexible, non-bureaucratic organization with the capacity to adapt smoothly to the evolving security environment. When we juxtapose the relatively modest budget of the OSCE with its concrete achievements, we get a better appreciation of the value of its role and contribution to security in the region.

A noteworthy "added-value" feature of the OSCE is its broad membership, which spans the globe from Vancouver to Vladivostok – stretching from America

over Europe to the Caucasus and Central Asia. This makes the OSCE a unique regional political forum that is simultaneously transatlantic, pan-European and Eurasian. This inclusiveness, coupled with the practice of deciding by consensus prevailing in the OSCE, exactly responds to the times: Security is more indivisible than ever and dialogue and co-operation are more indispensable than ever.

Another outstanding attribute of the OSCE is its comprehensive approach to security, combining the politico-military, human and economic-environmental dimensions. Through this unusual concept, the OSCE has gained valuable and widely-recognized expertise in building civil and democratic institutions. The interest shown by the Mediterranean and Asian countries in the OSCE model is proof of its relevance and vitality.

The OSCE draws its strength from its institutions and its presence in the field, through 19 missions and field offices in eastern and south-eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. These are the Organization's prime assets, and their role should be strengthened to enable them to meet the expectations of the host countries.

Above all, the OSCE is an organization that makes it possible for governments and civil society to work in tandem. Non-governmental organizations play a pivotal role in bringing ordinary citizens closer to the work of the OSCE. I believe this is a major strength.

To sum up, while the OSCE has been able to develop a valuable set of operational tools, we need to build on them so that the Organization can react more swiftly to crisis situations as they arise.

Victim of its success

As for weaknesses, the lack of visibility certainly is one, especially in the western part of the OSCE region. This is partly because "quiet diplomacy", which best defines the Organization's work, also conceals its own achievements. So, to a certain extent, the OSCE is a victim of its own success. Indeed, every day, thousands of men and women go about their tasks in the field, often under difficult conditions. This work needs to be encouraged and better publicized. Aware-

ness-raising efforts should be directed not only towards the general public but also towards opinion-makers and decision-takers.

Another weakness is the OSCE's lack of legal status under international law. We need to resolve this issue in a pragmatic manner to increase the Organization's efficiency.

What advice would you give to your successor on how best to handle the demanding role of Chairman-in-Office?

The Netherlands has been actively and carefully preparing for its Chairmanship in 2003, and I am certain that the Dutch Chairman-in-Office will develop an efficient work programme which will follow up on the decisions that we hope to reach at the Ministerial Council Meeting in Porto.



As you know, the Chairman-in-Office is vested with overall responsibility for executive action.

Over and above its operational tasks, the Chairmanship is expected to provide the OSCE with political guidance. This is a demanding task, one that serves as the driving force of the Organization's work through the development of concrete initiatives. Since the Chairman-in-Office needs to take into account the full spectrum of the participating States' views and positions, transparency and an ongoing consultative process are essential.

Fortunately, the Chairmanship is not a solitary post. It can count on the support of the members of the Troika. Indeed, I would like to thank my Dutch and Romanian colleagues for their valuable collaboration over the past year. The Chairman-in-Office can also rely on the very capable assistance of the Secretary General and his team.

One more thing: The incoming Dutch Chairman-in-Office should use the Netherlands' membership in the main bodies of the transatlantic architecture to

promote the Platform for Co-operative Security, which will help enhance the OSCE's visibility and importance.

There is much talk of the need for the OSCE to reform and reposition itself to meet the new threats to security and take account of the coming enlargement of NATO and the European Union and other changes. What is your view on this?

It is true that whenever the subject of the evolution of European security structures comes up, NATO and the European Union come to the fore. Their expansion will have a decisive impact on the shape of regional organizations in the transatlantic area.

This does not mean, however, that the OSCE will not retain its niche for the foreseeable future. In the first place, the enlargement of NATO and the EU is not a holistic process, so we should preserve the arrangements that have so far helped to consolidate the ties among Europeans as well as their links with their neighbouring partners. The OSCE *is* and *should* remain an effective forum – a "common house" for dialogue and co-operation in the transatlantic and Euroasian area, with no dividing lines.

In the second place, we are all aware that no one organization is capable of tackling the new threats to our individual and collective security. To avoid an overlapping of responsibilities and to come up with new collective action, co-operation and co-ordination between the United Nations, the OSCE, the European Union, NATO, the Council of Europe, the Shanghai Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States, among others, have to be reinforced. This was the spirit behind the Platform for Co-operative Security, and I am convinced that it should continue to be the guiding light in shaping the future of Europe's security.

What do you think about the role of smaller missions? Some delegations question their effectiveness.

As I said, I believe that the missions are among the Organization's major assets. One need only look at south-eastern Europe to understand the valuable contribution of the OSCE missions to the

long-term process of reform, reconciliation and rehabilitation.

Much of the progress on the ground is the result of continuous day-to-day dialogue and follow-up work at the local level. This would simply not be possible without the presence of the OSCE in the field. I might add that many other organizations also draw on the knowledge, expertise and contacts that the OSCE missions have acquired over the years in various countries.

That being said, it is true that the discussion on the role of OSCE missions has

had moments of controversy, and I agree that some issues should be addressed if the Organization is to continue to make a difference through its field activities.

For a start, we should change our mindset regarding the OSCE's field activities.

Firstly, we should change the popular perception that the presence of an OSCE mission is a stigma for the host country. We should, instead, emphasize the partnership of these missions with their host countries in the pursuit of shared goals.

Secondly, we should avoid the tempta-

tion to apply a standard mission model. Each mission should be designed to address specific circumstances. So I disagree with the view that small missions are ineffective. Depending on the situation, a small mission may make more sense than a large one; there may be cases when a country's authorities simply need a few resident experts to provide day-to-day assistance. The OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is not exactly a large mission compared with others in the region, and no one has ever questioned its effectiveness.

U.S. officials reaffirm strong commitment to OSCE

Secretary General presents OSCE programmes to Washington decision-makers

By Richard Murphy



(Left to right) Ambassador Robert Barry, Secretary General Jan Kubis, Deputy Foreign Minister Kim Traavik and Ambassador David Johnson in Washington, D.C.

Senior U.S. officials, at meetings in Washington, D.C. with OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubis in October, expressed strong support for the Organization. They also welcomed an increased OSCE focus on Central Asia and the Caucasus and an expansion of OSCE policing activities.

The Secretary General met officials at the State Department and the National Security Council and

spoke at a seminar on the future of the OSCE, organized by the British American Security Information Council (BASIC). He also hosted a breakfast for journalists, the first OSCE media event in the U.S. capital.

The intensive schedule of meetings included talks with Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, Lorne Craner, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for

European Affairs, Bob Bradtke.

Accompanying the Secretary General on his three-day visit were OSCE Senior Police Adviser Richard Monk and Steve Bennett, Director of the OSCE-run Kosovo Police Service School. In separate meetings on Capitol Hill, at the State Department and with senior law enforcement officers, they outlined plans to expand the Organization's policing activities.

"The clear message from the U.S. side was that Washington is strongly committed to the OSCE," Secretary General Kubis said. "The United States supports an increased OSCE focus on Central Asia and the Caucasus and an expansion of OSCE policing activities."

At the BASIC seminar on 22 October, the Secretary General addressed the thesis advanced by the former Head of Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ambassador Robert Barry, that the OSCE had become "the forgotten security organization".

"That may often be true in political circles and the media in the West, but in the countries in which the OSCE is active, we are not forgotten at all," he said. "The OSCE is the most inclusive security organization in Europe and will remain so, even after the enlargement of NATO and the European Union."

With its well-developed field presence, unbureaucratic structure and ability to respond quickly, the OSCE was well-placed to respond to new threats to stability and security, the Secretary General added.

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U.S. Ambassador to the OSCE Stephan Minikes took up this theme in his address to the seminar, noting that there was a glaring lack of knowledge about the work of the Organization in many countries.

Remarkable success

"But anyone who gets to know the Organization quickly becomes a believer in what it does," he said. "We should not lose sight of how remarkably successful this Organization has been."

Deputy Norwegian Foreign Minister Kim Traavik said the OSCE had proven in the Balkans that it could act quickly and decisively when necessary. "It is very nimble and light on its feet," he said.

But, he went on, the Organization would not be unaffected by the changes taking place in European security structures and it now needed to refocus its activities, both geographically – towards the Caucasus and Central Asia – and thematically, towards issues such as organized crime and international terrorism.

"The Organization can serve us well if we give it the political attention it needs to flourish," Mr. Traavik said.

He added that he would welcome a summit meeting of OSCE heads of government in 2003, provided it produced important political results, and said that

the Organization should also reform its own structures, including strengthening the Secretariat and the role of the Secretary General.

Other speakers at the seminar included former OSCE Chairman-in-Office Knut Vollebaek, who is now Norwegian Ambassador in Washington, and former U.S. Ambassador to the OSCE David Johnson.

Focus on policing

In his meetings with U.S. officials, Richard Monk, a former New Scotland Yard Commander with 35 years of police experience, explained the OSCE's plans to help build up policing capacity, especially in the participating States in Central Asia, in order to combat organized crime and international terrorism.

The OSCE's Strategic Police Matters Unit would offer long-term assistance programmes, run by top-notch police officers with proven expertise in such areas as forensics, crime intelligence systems, hostage rescue and public order. These professionals would be deployed as required to provide training and share their expertise with their local counterparts in participating States. The OSCE was aiming to build up a database of these police experts.

"There is an inclination in some quarters to regard terrorism as being beyond the sphere of conventional criminal activity," Mr. Monk said. "Well, it isn't. Terrorism's darkly sinister aims are nothing other than a criminal conspiracy, and it sustains itself and executes its purpose by means that are entirely criminal."

"There is ample evidence to show that policing plays a vital role in preventing conflict, preserving social stability during a political crisis and in post-conflict rehabilitation," he added. "It is equally apparent that, without effective law enforcement and respect for the institutions of the rule of law, there can be no social, political or economic stability."

"The OSCE alone has experience from its strong field presence and operations, institutional influence and broad membership to provide the long-term engagement required," Mr. Monk said. "Respect for the human rights of detainees will be a constant thread running through our programmes. Honesty, integrity and the respect of the community are vital for effective policing."

Richard Murphy is OSCE Head of Press and Public Information.

OSCE/ODIHR annual conference reviews full palette of human rights issues

Work in democratization is more than just organizing elections

By Jens-Hagen Eschenbächer

Some 700 participants gathered in Warsaw from 9 to 19 September to review progress made by OSCE countries in implementing their human rights commitments. It was the best attended Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in the ten-year history of these events. A noteworthy development was the excellent representation of non-governmental

organizations (NGOs), including key human rights groups such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

The impressive level of participation indicates that we have managed to reverse the downward trend of recent years," said Steven Wagenheil, Deputy Director of the OSCE's

Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the conference's main organizer.

Trapped in the straitjacket of an inflexible agenda and cut off from the Organization's decision-making processes, the conference had suffered from a steady erosion of importance over the past decade. Many interna-

tional NGOs no longer bothered to send representatives to Warsaw, and governments were often represented only at a junior level, Mr. Wagenseil added.

Joint efforts by the ODIHR and government delegations to the OSCE to revamp the agenda and to re-establish the link with the Organization's political work in Vienna and at the Ministerial Council appear to have been effective in stemming the gradual decline. To be sure, this year's discussions, while more open and spirited, still frequently became bogged down in lengthy prepared statements. However, the quality and relevance of the working sessions and side meetings were generally a notch higher than in previous years.

The protection of human rights in the fight against terrorism was a most appropriate theme during the first days of the conference, which coincided with the first anniversary of 11 September.

Fragile states

"It is a dangerous illusion that [the fight against] terrorism could be won only by using military power," said Martti Ahtisaari, the former President of Finland, in a keynote address. "In parallel, the international community should address the root causes of conflicts and the sometimes-legitimate sense of injustice through diplomacy, economic aid and peace processes."

Fragile states with frail institutions represented a particularly easy target for global terrorism, Mr. Ahtisaari said, underlining the importance of a comprehensive approach to the fight against terrorism. Porous borders, weak and corrupt law enforcement forces, and impotent judicial systems made the task of terrorists easier.

"True democracy is more than just organizing elections once in a while," said Ambassador Gerard Stoudmann, outgoing ODIHR Director. "Too often, we see mere appearances of democracy, while the fundamental understanding – that democracy actually means credible checks and balances, social and ethnic inclusiveness, a truly independent judiciary and an active and participatory civil society – is still missing."

Countering terrorism

The United States' range of responses to the new security threats posed by terrorism were discussed in one of the sessions. During a telephone conference, William H. Taft, Legal Adviser in the U.S. State Department, answered questions from participants and defended his country's position on the treatment of detainees in Guantanamo Bay, military tribunals, the International Criminal Court, the death penalty and other controversial

ing out executions for crimes committed during peacetime.

Elections

More than a decade after the adoption of the 1990 Copenhagen Document, which contains by far the most comprehensive catalogue of international commitments relating to democratic elections, a special one-day session discussed the so-called "Copenhagen II", referring to a new set of commitments reflecting the experiences of



Nicolae Gheorghe of the ODIHR talks to a journalist about the OSCE's work to improve the plight of Roma and Sinti

issues. He stressed that "the United States is committed to the belief that the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms is the best defence against the rise of extremism and terror".

Capital punishment

The ODIHR took the opportunity to present its 2002 report on capital punishment in the OSCE region. Delegates welcomed the report's conclusion that the abolition of the death penalty was a continuing trend, with only Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, the United States and Uzbekistan – out of the 55 OSCE participating States – still carry-

ing participating States and international organizations in holding and overseeing election processes.

As an initial step, the ODIHR presented a draft analysis of existing case law, standards and commitments that are outlined in various documents or have emerged from international forums. Participants urged the OSCE Ministerial Council to assign the ODIHR the task of working on the document over the coming year, with a view to developing new commitments.

Trafficking in human beings

In another full-day session, devoted especially to issues concerning traf-

ficking in human beings, the involvement of some international field mission personnel in this modern form of slavery was laid squarely on the table. Ambassador Stoudmann called on the OSCE participating States not to close their eyes to the incidents, but to hold their citizens accountable for any involvement in criminal activities in mission areas. "Training and codes of conduct are important," he said, "but without real accountability, international efforts to combat trafficking will not be credible."

The session was introduced by Kathryn Bolkovac, a former officer with the International Police Task Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She had apparently been dismissed after informing her superiors about the international community's involvement in the trafficking of women. Discussions focused on national referral mechanisms and advocacy of victims' rights.

Roma and Sinti issues

In a significant development, Roma NGOs, mostly from France and Romania, acknowledged the culpability of individuals from their ethnic group in human trafficking activities and made known their determination to work with national authorities in countering the problem. The subject came up during a series of meetings on freedom of movement and asylum seekers organized by the ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues. Romani groups had been reluctant to acknowledge the role of Roma in trafficking and other organized-crime activities for fear it would jeopardize their safety and perpetuate existing stereotypes.

"This move paves the way for the participation of Roma civil society in the responses of governments to trafficking and other forms of illegal migration," said Nicolae Gheorghe, the ODIHR's Adviser on Roma and Sinti Issues. "By involving civil society, we hope to ensure

that states do not just take repressive measures; they should also address the root causes that lead to Roma becoming victims of ruthless smugglers or trafficking networks."

The conference ended with a strong call on governments to redouble their efforts to eradicate human rights violations and push forward democratic reform across the entire OSCE area.

A special session of the Permanent Council on 4 October discussed a report by Ambassador Stoudmann on the key recommendations emerging from the conference. Follow-up discussions are also expected to take place at the meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council on 6 and 7 December in Porto, Portugal. The full report of the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting is available on www.osce.org/odihhr.

Jens-Hagen Eschenbächer is Spokesperson of the ODIHR and Head of its Public Affairs Unit.

Invest in Organization's strengths, outgoing ODIHR chief urges participating States

Gerard Stoudmann, who stepped down in November as Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), feels the OSCE still has much to offer the international community. However, in a farewell interview with OSCE Head of Press and Public Information Richard Murphy, he expressed concern that too many officials in participating States no longer "give a damn" about the Organization.

Do we still need the OSCE?

Ultimately, this depends on the governments of the participating States and whether they are still interested in this Organization. As for my personal view, the answer is: yes. The OSCE is the only regional organization that is not a closed club, and the only one that is in Central Asia and in the Caucasus. These countries are not going to join the European Union or NATO any time soon. We

should focus on conflict prevention and institution-building in these regions.

The question is, however, whether the OSCE will be able to meet the challenges and continue to effectively support transition there. The Organization certainly needs to develop its capabilities further, both qualitatively and quantitatively. I mean, for instance, that it should be able to develop credible projects beyond the human dimension in the strict sense, in such areas as police training, or in the economic dimension.

I think the OSCE should start thinking about its future role in the context of EU enlargement. Obviously, the European security architecture will be influenced by new realities. For many participating States in Central Europe, the "added value" provided by the OSCE will substantially decrease once they have become EU members.

In the Balkans and Central Europe,

the OSCE is no longer in the driver's seat in terms of crisis management. It is clear that NATO is becoming more and more a crisis-management body, while the EU is developing its own operational capabilities. Of course, this doesn't mean that, in the Balkans, the OSCE has become totally irrelevant. There are certainly some niches left, such as in the election field or the kind of monitoring done by our mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

With regard to elections, I believe there is no other body that can do what the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights is doing in terms of election monitoring as a confidence-building tool that goes beyond the purely technical aspect – in the interests of the international community as a whole and of the countries concerned.

I therefore believe that there is still hope for a future role for the OSCE, if



“Excellent work”. In recognition of his distinguished contribution to the Organization as Director of ODHR for almost six years, Gerard Stoudmann (above, left) is presented with the OSCE Medal at the closing of the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw on 19 September. Congratulating him is the Chairman of the OSCE Permanent Council, Francisco Seixas da Costa of Portugal. Ambassador Stoudmann has assumed his new post as Director of the Centre for Security Policy in Geneva.

In an article about Ambassador Stoudmann’s departure from the OSCE, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* of 4 November said that “Under his excellent work, the ODIHR has become one

of the most important international institutions for human rights.” Despite his diplomatic background – he was with the Swiss Foreign Ministry, as was his father – “he possesses a rare character trait not usually found in diplomatic circles: the readiness to speak up on a deplorable situation without fear of confrontation with governments.”

His guiding principle, said the article, is: “Without respect for human rights, long-term security is not possible.” Asked to reflect on his departure, Ambassador Stoudmann said he agreed with Mary Robinson, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, who had said: “If one leaves such a job and everybody is content, then one certainly did something wrong.”

somewhat less profiled, provided the Organization maintains high professional standards and remains focused and target-oriented.

There are a lot of organizations operating in this field. What is our unique selling point?

There are indeed. And if we are not careful, or if the participating States

should lose interest in this Organization, it might become irrelevant.

Having said this, the OSCE’s unique selling point is the fact that we have a very solid field presence in the form of the OSCE missions, and that we have autonomous institutions such as the Representative on Freedom of the Media, the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the ODIHR, all of which operate

with great flexibility and minimal bureaucracy.

That is to say, the field presences and the institutions together are the Organization’s future. If you cripple these instruments, the value of the OSCE is greatly diminished and it will probably become just a security talking shop, as it has sometimes wrongly been described.

Our comparative advantages consist of our adaptability – I mean our ability to react quickly to new situations – our strong presence in the field, and our generally very dedicated professionals. My experience is also that we have a clear comparative advantage in terms of implementing very good, impact-oriented projects.

Are you concerned that the increasing emphasis on the economic dimension could weaken our commitment in the human dimension?

No. If we take the right approach to the economic dimension, these activities will complement the OSCE activities in the human dimension and will therefore be useful. If the OSCE were to try to copy and compete with better equipped economic organizations, then this would be to the detriment of the credibility of the OSCE’s economic dimension. However, it would not affect the very good and credible work done in the human dimension.

I believe that what used to be called the three “baskets” – politico-military security, the economic dimension and the human dimension – should be seen as a whole when it comes to conflict prevention and ensuring long-term stability. OSCE activities in these three sectors should therefore not be in competition with each other, but should be part of the same effort.

Of course, this requires a willingness to think “out of the box” in order to give substance to the concept of comprehensive security. There is still some way to go to ensure that everyone’s perceptions are aligned on this.

If you were asked to design a blueprint for the future of the OSCE, how would it look?

The OSCE should continue to invest in the comparative advantages that set it

apart from other institutions; in other words, it should stay lean and flexible, and it should have a strong profile in Central Asia. It also urgently needs to invest more effort in developing medium- and long-term strategies, something which in my view is completely lacking today – and not only in the human dimension.

We cannot continue to have what I would describe as a feudal system, in which everyone – from heads of field missions to heads of institutions – determines their own priorities, often in a haphazard way, and where chairmanships feel the need to reinvent the wheel in different forms every year, changing priorities on the basis of the trends of the moment or their individual “hobbies”.

There needs to be more institutional memory and continuity, and the Secretariat, in particular, should be strengthened – in terms of substance, not in terms of bureaucracy and inflation of paperwork. In this respect, a tool to support the Chairmanship and ensure the institutional memory it represents would certainly be useful.

I would also attach great importance to maintaining high professional standards, especially in the field operations. My experience is that in this Organization, more than anywhere else, individuals can make a real difference – something that should not be forgotten when seconding staff to the OSCE.

What has given you the greatest satisfaction?

Firstly, to have been given the chance to develop the ODIHR into one of Europe's most credible and recognized human rights institutions, now with more than 80 staff, a total budget of 12 million

euro and around 100 pragmatic, impact-oriented and focused projects.

Secondly, the ability to be making an impact, however limited, on a number of issues in the human dimension field, such as trafficking in human beings, to name but one. Of course, the problems are not disappearing, but it nevertheless gives a lot of satisfaction if, through your direct intervention, you can bring about the release of women who have been kept as sex slaves or, in another context, that of political prisoners.

It is also rewarding to have the feeling of having made a contribution, however modest, to preventing conflict and avoiding crisis. I am thinking, for example, of our election work in Albania in 1997 or, more recently, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

And your biggest disappointment and frustration?

My biggest disappointment has come from seeing the gap growing between the political class, or should we say ruling elite, and ordinary citizens throughout the OSCE area and sensing the mounting frustration with governments.

This does not bode well for the future development of democratic societies or for the pace of transition. Too often, I have seen only the appearance of democracy and have had to recognize that, behind the nice words and the facade presented for the international community, in too many societies democratic principles and values have not truly taken root.

Another disappointment has been the clear decline in interest in this Organization in too many participating States. An increasing number of

people seem not to give a damn about the OSCE. This is understandable to an extent, in view of the development of other structures in the security field, and it may be the result of the natural evolution of the European security architecture. But when political will is lacking, you can't do much. An organization is only worth what its member States are prepared to invest in it.

What advice would you offer to your successor?

My successor has three challenges: The first is technical: to gain an overview of the great number of activities the ODIHR is engaged in right now, from prison reform in Kazakhstan to revision of the electoral code in Azerbaijan to projects to combat trafficking in Moldova. The new ODIHR Director needs to gain an overview and be able to determine priorities.

The second challenge is to be able to walk the very thin line between the need to maintain good co-operative relationships with governments and the need to retain the credibility of the institution as a human rights agency, mandated to oversee the implementation of OSCE commitments. We should not disappoint civil society, in particular those who take enormous risks to defend the values of human rights and democracy within participating States.

The third challenge, linked to the other two, is to motivate the staff – people who are working with the ODIHR and the OSCE because they have chosen to, not because it's just another job on a chosen career track. The wealth of experience and commitment assembled within this institution is what has made the ODIHR a success.

ODIHR appoints anti-terrorism co-ordinator

Peter Key assumed the post of ODIHR's Co-ordinator on Anti-Terrorism Issues on 1 October. The ODIHR had created the position to further develop the activities of the Office in countering terrorism and to co-ordinate them with those of OSCE field missions, the Secretariat in Vienna and other international organizations. Mr. Key will focus on analyzing counter-terrorism legislation and measures being drawn up by participating States, monitoring their impact on human rights, and developing and implementing projects that specifically address factors engendering terrorism.

Politico-Military Code of Conduct remains relevant

After 11 September, democratic governance of armed forces is “more useful than ever”

By Taina Susiluoto

The role of the armed forces in democratic societies, one of the most sensitive issues bearing on the national security and sovereignty of States, has recently been the focus of intense activity in the OSCE region. The subject of scrutiny is the Organization's Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, hailed as a landmark document when it committed all the participating States to placing their security and armed forces under democratic control.

It is remarkable that this eight-year-old document has not only survived the radical changes in the global security environment over the past few years, but is also eliciting renewed interest. In September, the OSCE's 55 participating States met in Vienna especially to review the Code's implementation. Other recent activities include a series of roundtables in the Caucasus which examined the topic in depth. In addition, a number of related events are planned for later this year.

Indeed, the concepts laid down by the OSCE Code of Conduct are no less relevant today than they were in 1994, when it was adopted in Budapest as a direct response to the changing role of armed forces in societies in transition. Since then, democratic control of the armed and security forces, transparency of military budgets and public access to defence information have become fundamental principles that participating States seek to abide by. The Code has also given due recognition to the importance of international humanitarian law and the civil rights of members of the armed forces.

Although the Code covers many aspects dealing with relations between States, its centrepiece is the function of armed forces in democratic societies.



The Federal Parliament in Belgrade was the site of a seminar on the democratic control of armed forces on 4 and 5 November

Currently, many of the OSCE participating States are redefining the role of their security forces and intelligence services. Particularly after the events of 11 September last year, there has been a marked tendency to enlarge the powers of security forces and to beef up military spending. As developments unfold in this area, it is crucial that democratic governance of security forces is maintained in accordance with OSCE politico-military commitments.

Anti-terrorism instrument

The Code is notable in that it sets standards for civilian-military relations in the OSCE region. However, it is the Organization's current efforts to combat terrorism that have breathed new life into the document. The Code, after all, spells out – in no uncertain terms – the commitment of OSCE States to fully co-operate with one another to prevent and counter terrorism in all its forms. The delegations in Vienna are continuing to

vigorously explore the various ways in which the Code can contribute most effectively to common efforts against terrorism.

Despite the fact that the OSCE Code of Conduct is truly unique – it has no counterpart in any other international security institution – the Organization has not succeeded in making its partner organizations, let alone the wider public, fully aware of this groundbreaking document. This is unfortunate, since the OSCE experience can serve as a model for other regional organizations to follow.

Third follow-up conference

In the framework of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC), an autonomous body that plays a central role in fulfilling the Organization's security mandate, the participating States exchange a wealth of information every year on the implementation of their commitments under the Code.

This year, at the third follow-up conference since the Code's adoption, the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) of the OSCE Secretariat presented an overview of previous exchanges among the participating States on the Code's implementation, identifying common trends and problem areas to underpin the discussions. The delegates reiterated the need for closer international co-operation and agreed to strengthen the existing information exchange on international commitments and conventions on combating terrorism. The FSC will drive this process forward in the coming weeks.

The conference was held under the leadership of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which had assumed the chairmanship of the FSC in August. Ambassador Branislav Milinkovic, Head of the Yugoslav Delegation to the OSCE and chairperson of the conference, was pleased with the quality of the debate and the sharing of individual experiences. "I believe the conference helped raise awareness of the Code and its provisions, which should be one of the priorities for the OSCE in the future," he said.

Implementing the code

The review conference served to encourage the CPC to intensify its efforts to promote the Code's implementation in participating States. In June this year, for example, the CPC held a series of national roundtables in the Caucasus for this sole purpose. The events were organized in close co-operation with the governments of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, and with the OSCE field missions in these countries.

A team of OSCE representatives and experts from research institutes such as the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces facilitated open and lively discussions between participants from the various ministries and representatives of security and counter-intelligence services. The successful exercise will soon be repeated in Central Asia – in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

In early November, the CPC held a joint seminar with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly for the benefit of parliamentarians and senior military personnel from south-eastern Europe, Moldova and Ukraine. The event, organized with the support of the OSCE Mission to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

served as a rare opportunity for an exchange of views on democratic control of armed forces and the parliamentary oversight of military planning.

The increasing demand for activities focusing on the Code is a clear sign that governments find the OSCE document more useful than ever in guiding their civilian-military relations during the current insecure times. The Organization's 55 participating States – all stakeholders in the Code of Conduct – will be following the development of new and pragmatic initiatives designed to foster its implementation.

As Turkey's Head of Delegation, Ambassador Omur Orhun, said when he recently passed on the Chairmanship of the FSC from his country to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: "There is no doubt that the implementation of major agreements such as the Code of Conduct helps create an atmosphere of trust and goodwill among States and reduces the risk of conflict between them."

Taina Susiluoto is Support Officer in the FSC Support Unit of the Conflict Prevention Centre within the OSCE Secretariat.

"The participating States will not support terrorist acts in any way and will take appropriate measures to prevent and combat terrorism in all its forms. They will co-operate fully in combating the threat of terrorist activities through implementation of international instruments and commitments they agree upon in this respect. They will, in particular, take steps to fulfil the requirements of international agreements by which they are bound to prosecute or extradite terrorists."

Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, paragraph 6

OSCE Agenda

8 December, Republic of Serbia/Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Observation of presidential elections. ODIHR

22 December, Republic of Montenegro/Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Observation of presidential elections. ODIHR

Recent events

4 to 5 November, Rhodes, Greece. Mediterranean seminar on the media and new technologies: Implications for governments, international organizations and civil society. OSCE External Co-operation Section

11 and 12 November, Sofia. First preparatory seminar for the 11th OSCE Economic Forum focusing on trafficking in small arms and light weapons. Incoming Dutch OSCE Chairmanship, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bulgaria, and Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

ODIHR meets challenge of elections in south-eastern Europe

Coming soon: Democracy on display in the Caucasus

By Jens-Hagen Eschenbacher

The 2002 observation operations of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) covered 20 elections. Never before was the Office called on to observe and assess this many elections in one year.

Since mid-September, we have been observing at least one election a week somewhere, and often we had several observation missions going on at the same time," says Hrair Balian, Head of the ODIHR's Election Section. "This really stretched our limited resources to the maximum."

South-eastern Europe featured prominently on the ODIHR's election observation agenda. Almost half of the ODIHR missions in 2002 were deployed to monitor the long series of elections in the region during the second half of the year.

One of the most important of these elections was the parliamentary vote in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in September – the first to be held after the events of 2001, which had brought the country to the brink of civil war. The ODIHR had sent a reinforced 900-observer mission, the largest ever deployed by the OSCE.

"This strong presence contributed significantly to the major role played by the elections in building confidence and bringing about normalization after last year's crisis," Mr. Balian says.

The ODIHR observers concluded that the elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were largely in line with international standards, as were the other elections and run-offs in the region – in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia.

In all these elections, the actual voting and the counting of ballots received good marks from the observers. [See the



Parliamentary elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

following related articles and the ODIHR section.] The polling days generally passed without major incidents and irregularities.

However, the elections in the region also shared certain unsatisfactory elements, for example, weaknesses in the legislative framework, some of which were serious, and the often biased reporting in the media, especially by state broadcasting outlets.

Reforming electoral process

The ODIHR works with the authorities and civil society to follow up on the recommendations outlined in its reports

and assists in reforming electoral processes. In Albania and Montenegro, the Office played a key role in settling serious election-related disputes between the major political forces.

In Albania, the agreement between the government and opposition parties to create a joint commission to investigate concerns surrounding last year's elections signalled a new era of political dialogue and consensus. The ODIHR had prompted the agreement.

In Montenegro, it was the mediation of the ODIHR, the OSCE Mission and other international actors that enabled the parliamentary elections to take place as

planned in October, forestalling a constitutional crisis. The growing political divide between the major parties had threatened to destabilize the Republic's political processes in the summer.

"These examples show that electoral reform often has positive, broader political implications that reach far beyond specific electoral technicalities," says Mr. Balian.

Observing older democracies

Under the 1990 Copenhagen Document, all 55 OSCE participating States are committed to invite international observers to monitor their elections.

This year, for the first time, the ODIHR assessed the elections in some of

the OSCE's long-standing democracies. At the invitation of the host governments, the Office sent expert teams to assess the presidential elections in France in April and May, the parliamentary elections in Turkey in November, and the congressional elections in the United States in November.

"I think it is definitely a positive development that long-standing democracies do not feel exempt from their commitment to invite international observers," says Mr. Balian. "We responded to some of the invitations by deploying assessment missions, but because of financial and personnel constraints, the ODIHR could not respond positively to all the requests. An important element in

our decision to deploy assessment missions to older democracies was the opportunity to have a closer look at the lessons learned in terms of how these countries address hiccups in their electoral processes."

The coming months will see a shift of the observation focus from south-eastern Europe to the southern Caucasus, where a number of important elections are scheduled for 2003. This does not mean, however, that the ODIHR will disengage itself from electoral affairs in south-eastern Europe or other OSCE regions any time soon. The staff will use the breathing space to follow up the ODIHR's detailed electoral reports and recommendations with individual governments.

Bosnia and Herzegovina assumes ownership of its electoral process

By Emir Salihovic

October 5th marked a turning point, not only for Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), but also for the OSCE Mission there. Now armed with an Election Law and Election Commission, national authorities organized and ran the general elections themselves, for the first time without the OSCE's direct involvement since the signing of the Dayton Agreement in 1995.

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Portuguese Foreign Minister Antonio Martins da Cruz, called the event "a decisive moment in shaping the country's future and a unique opportunity for the people and authorities to show that they are willing to take ownership of their own destiny".

Pieter De Crem (MP, Belgium), who was designated by the CiO as Special Co-ordinator heading the OSCE Election Observation Mission, said that the elections signified "important progress toward the consolidation of democracy and rule of law under domestic control". The Observation Mission was a joint effort of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human rights



General elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina

(ODIHR) and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

"The new national election administration has successfully passed its first test," said Peter Eicher (United States), head of the ODIHR's Observation Mission, "but the final judgement will depend on the results of the tabulation and the complaints process."

About 15,000 people, in addition to

some 6,000 local and international observers, worked in 3,600 polling stations throughout the country. Because of the unique constitutional framework, voters had a complicated task. More than 50 political parties were involved.

At the State level, citizens voted for members of the rotating BiH Presidency and for members of the BiH House of Representatives. At Entity level, they voted for representatives to Republika Srpska's National Assembly and to the Federation's House of Representatives. The President and Vice President of Republika Srpska, the members of the cantonal assemblies of the Federation of BiH and the municipal authorities in Zepce were also elected.

Participation was low, especially in urban areas: 54 per cent of a registered electorate of 2.3 million. It was an indication of the populace's growing political weariness and apathy after six rounds of elections since the end of the conflict in 1995.

After six years of being at the forefront of funding, supervising and organizing the country's elections, the staff of

the OSCE Mission to BiH was this time able to watch from the sidelines in supporting spectator roles. It was clear that

an important milestone had been reached in turning over political responsibility to the citizens.

Emir Salihovic is a press officer with the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Observing the handover of elections to Bosnia and Herzegovina

By Sophia Wilkinson

A short queue of voters was already waiting patiently outside the temporary polling station in Pale, near Sarajevo, when I arrived with my team-mate and an interpreter to observe the start of voting. Inside, everything was under control. Members of the polling station committee sat behind a table stacked with neat piles of ballot papers.

The committee president, who had his hands full, making sure everything was in order, instructed us to join the group of local observers. At 7 a.m. on the dot, the voters filed in and were presented with four different ballot papers.

Given the complexity of the voting system in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there was surprisingly little confusion. Several elderly people asked for assistance, which the Election Law allows under certain conditions. We watched the proceedings for about half an hour,

asking a number of questions before filling in an observation form.

We headed to our next polling station after a quick stop at a bakery to grab some breakfast. By the end of the day, we had visited about 15 polling stations. In some, where the pace was slow, the staff were able to offer us a warm reception and fruit and biscuits – a welcome respite from the damp weather.

Polling station committees were eager to demonstrate that they knew exactly what they were doing – which indeed they did, for the most part. So did the voters. The counting process seemed to pose the most difficulties. At least this was the case at a rural polling station in the mountains outside Pale. There was considerable discussion among the committee members about how to count and record the ballot papers for four different election races, some of which included both

party and candidate lists. Although the polling station had only recorded 78 voters, counting took three hours.

Fortunately, there were only a few irregularities to report. What was noticeable, however, was just how few young people there were among the voters. But perhaps most striking of all was the low turnout: at our final polling station, only 23 per cent of the registered voters cast their ballots.

In the weeks leading up to the elections, the media had warned that people in BiH were fed up with politics and elections and that apathy among the young was particularly high. Undoubtedly, these warnings were confirmed in the polling stations around Pale.

Sophia Wilkinson, public information analyst with the OSCE Mission to BiH, was one of 400 international observers during the country's general elections.

Kosovo's new councillors set stage for representative government

By Sven Lindholm

Kosovo has passed another test on the road to becoming a working democracy. The second OSCE-organized municipal elections on 26 October introduced diverse voices into the political scene and set the stage for more self-reliant local government in the next four years.

The organization and operation of the 2002 municipal elections by the OSCE has been an unqualified success," said Pascal Fieschi, Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, in his report to the OSCE Permanent Council. He commended the work of national election

staff, who assumed greater responsibilities this year with less international supervision (see *OSCE Newsletter*, September 2002).

In 30 separate contests, one in each of Kosovo's municipalities, voters were presented with the most diverse set of

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choices ever. Out of a total of 68 political parties, coalitions, independent candidates and citizens' initiatives competing for seats in municipal assemblies, 40 entities won seats. By comparison, in the first municipal elections, in October 2000, only 14 different entities were elected to at least one seat.

From Lisbon, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Portuguese Foreign Minister Antonio Martins da Cruz, congratulated Kosovo's citizens and hailed the Council of Europe's assessment that the elections were in line with European principles and standards.

The competitive but peaceful nature of the campaign was a sign that the election process was on its way to normalization. In 2000, during the first elections after the conflict, emotions ran high and voter enthusiasm was palpable. This year, at the urging of the OSCE, political entities campaigned on issues affecting peoples' day-to-day lives at the local level.

It was also the first time that all the communities were going to have elected representation in municipal assemblies. "Thanks to the political parties as well as the OSCE, all the communities in Kosovo participated," said the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General, Michael Steiner, who certified the results on 3 November at the recommendation of the Central Election Commission.

Transferring power

Two years ago, some municipal assembly representatives were appointed, rather than elected, as the Kosovo Serb community chose not to take part in the polling. "We still have a long way to go in fulfilling the benchmarks, but this election confirms we are making huge steps forward," Mr. Steiner said.

These elections have also served as a test case for transferring power in an orderly and responsible manner. "According to the results, the ruling majority can and will change in some municipalities," said Ambassador



People with special needs were assisted by the OSCE to cast their vote before polling day

Fieschi. In many cases, the gap between the major parties has been narrowed – precisely the development needed to spur politicians on to serve the people better and to present them with alternatives.

In 15 municipalities, a single political party received enough votes to garner a majority of seats in a municipal assembly: in 11 of these municipalities, it was the Democratic League of Kosovo (headed by Ibrahim Rugova) and in four municipalities, it was the Democratic Party of Kosovo (headed by Hashim Thaci). Political entities representing the Kosovo Serb community received the largest share of votes in five municipalities. However, in each instance, none of the entities obtained more than 50 per cent of the vote. In other municipalities, coalitions will need to be formed to build majorities to elect the leaders of the municipal assembly.

Small parties

One interesting trend has emerged from these elections which politicians should bear in mind in future races: voters clearly showed a preference for small, locally-based parties and initiatives that ran only in their municipality. Overall, 33 seats were won by 19 single-municipality contenders.

Women will have greater representation in the new municipal assemblies. Out of 920 elected municipal assembly members, 262 are women, or 28 per cent of the total. This means that the number of women elected in municipalities is now on a par with the female representation in

the Kosovo Assembly. The substantial increase compared to the 2000 elections, when the proportion of women elected in municipalities was 8 per cent, speaks well for the OSCE's efforts to draw more women into Kosovo's political process.

Overall participation was 53.9 per cent. Of 1.32 million registered voters both in Kosovo and outside, more than 711,000 citizens cast their votes. Although the turnout of voters was proportionately lower than in 2000, the number of registered voters has grown by some 400,000 in absolute terms.

Now that the people have spoken, "political parties, their leaders and their supporters need to respect the results and to move forward to take Kosovo into the future", said Ambassador Fieschi. He also said that the OSCE would fully support the municipal assemblies and their members in their work of building effective, democratic and multi-ethnic local government.

Barely two weeks after the elections, the OSCE launched the first of five training sessions to provide Kosovo's newly elected councillors, many of whom are serving in this capacity for the first time, with the tools they need to best serve their communities. The sessions are conducted directly in Albanian and Serbian by OSCE national democratization officers, without interpretation from English – another milestone on the road to self-reliance.

Sven Lindholm is Deputy Spokesperson at the OSCE Mission in Kosovo.

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Community policing aims to build confidence

Police experts from the OSCE participating States and representatives of civil society gathered in Vienna on 28 and 29 October to discuss the role of community policing in building confidence among minority communities and in post-conflict situations.

The Third Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting in 2002 highlighted the special problems encountered by societies in transition in introducing community policing.

The participants urged governments to change their approach to police work by expanding law enforcement activities to include problem-solving and service-delivery. They stressed the need for com-

prehensive police reform, backed by a strong and determined political will. They also agreed that there was no single universal formula for success in community policing and that any reform would

The OSCE Mission to Croatia and the Croatian Ministry of the Interior have made it possible for British and Croatian police officers to exchange information on community policing under a long-term programme



OSCE Tim R. Fisher

Conference in Baku warns of “clash based on ignorance”

Religion and beliefs can play an important role in preventing and combating terrorism, conflict and extremism, said participants in an international conference in Baku. The gathering, held on 10 and 11 October, was organized by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the Government of Azerbaijan. It was opened by Heydar Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan, and Gerard Stoudmann, outgoing Director of the ODIHR.

Some 400 representatives of governments, religious communities and civil society called on States to ensure religious freedom and to direct counter-terrorism measures against individual perpetrators of terrorist acts – and not against their national, ethnic or religious communities.

They rejected any attempts to justify terrorism and extremism on political,

religious, economic and social grounds. “All religions and similar beliefs preach tolerance and respect for the inherent humanity of all persons, and that violence and terrorism are incompatible with the authentic spirit of religion,” the conference report said. “The recourse to terrorism under the name of religion does not demonstrate a clash of culture, but a clash based on ignorance.”

Religious leaders figured prominently at the conference in Baku organized by ODIHR and the Government of Azerbaijan



OSCE Alexey Novitskiy

The participants urged States to fully respect human rights in countering terrorism, specifically the freedom of religion or belief. “Just as religion may wrongly be used to justify terrorism, so can “anti-terrorism” actions of governments be used wrongly to justify actions that undermine human rights and freedom of religion or belief, the conference warned.



OSCE Chairman-in-Office visits Central Asia

The OSCE's Chairman-in-Office (CiO), Portuguese Foreign Minister Antonio Martins da Cruz, travelled to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan from 29 October to 1 November to emphasize the growing importance of co-operation between Central Asia and the Organization, especially in combating terrorism. In his meetings with heads of State, foreign ministers and representatives of civil society and the media, all sides stressed that the

culties between Belarus and the OSCE, the Belarusian authorities had refused to extend the diplomatic accreditation of the Officer-in-Charge – the last remaining international member – of the Advisory and Monitoring Group (AMG) in Belarus.

Once again, the Chairmanship reiterated its readiness to enter into productive negotiations with the Belarusian authorities on the future OSCE presence in Belarus.

The statement said that while the Belarusian authorities had withdrawn all

Deputy Acting Head in June and its Human Dimension Officer in September.

Georgian-South Ossetian talks given new impetus

Concrete recommendations to give fresh impetus to the full-scale settlement of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict were examined at a meeting in Castelo Branco, Portugal, from 26 to 29 October. The Eighth Meeting of the Experts' Groups of authorized delegations of Georgian and South Ossetian sides was mediated by the Russian Federation and included representatives of the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania, the OSCE and the European Commission. The meeting was attended by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office.

Both sides stressed the need to implement economic rehabilitation projects to create conditions favourable to the political settlement in the zone of conflict. New proposals of the European Commission for their implementation were presented at the meeting.

Chairman-in-Office condemns hostage-taking in Moscow

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office strongly condemned the taking of hundreds of Russian and foreign citizens as hostages by a group of gunmen in a Moscow theatre on 23 October. "We denounce this terrorist act and its brutal nature," he said in a statement from Lisbon on 24 October. "No political motivation can justify the use of force against innocent civilians. Extremism and fanaticism can only contribute to worsening the prospects for a political settlement of conflicts and tensions."

In a statement on 31 October, the Portuguese Chairmanship expressed deep regret at the heavy loss of life during the incident. "The strong commitment of this Organization to combating all violent political acts, in particular terrorist acts, needs to be reaffirmed on this occasion," the statement said.



The OSCE CiO, Portuguese Foreign Minister Antonio Martins da Cruz (right), and Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister, K.Tokaev, meet the press in Astana

OSCE should continue to strengthen regional security and stability while addressing environmental and economic challenges and maintaining its activities dealing with respect for human rights, freedom of expression and institution-building.

CiO regrets Belarus decision not to accredit AMG official

A statement issued on 29 October in Vienna expressed regret that despite renewed efforts by the Portuguese Chairmanship to overcome the current diffi-

culties between Belarus and the OSCE, the Belarusian authorities had refused to extend the diplomatic accreditation of the Officer-in-Charge – the last remaining international member – of the Advisory and Monitoring Group (AMG) in Belarus.

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Slovak Republic: parliamentary elections, 20 and 21 September

The ODIHR observed the parliamentary elections in the Slovak Republic, concluding that they met international standards. The observation mission noted that all levels of the electoral administration had worked efficiently, had demonstrated impartiality and transparency, and enjoyed a high level of popular trust. The election legislation had been amended over the past four years to improve the credibility of the procedures.

The mission noted that public television and radio had fulfilled their legal obligations and that their coverage of the campaign had been balanced. Overall, private electronic and print media had provided a variety of views.

However, the legislative framework still had some weaknesses: Central Election Commission regulatory instructions needed to be binding at the lower level of the election commissions; provisions should be made for domestic and international observers, although accreditation had been granted liberally to both; and provisions governing the treatment of the electoral campaign by the electronic media should be clarified.

The ODIHR mission, headed by Ambassador Michael G. Wygant (United States), did not observe polling stations on election day itself.

Serbia: first and second rounds of presidential election, 29 September and 13 October

Despite persistent shortcomings, the first round of the Serbian presidential elections on 29 September was largely in line with international standards. The

ODIHR announced this preliminary conclusion on 30 September.

The international observers noted that, with 11 candidates standing for election as president, the voters had had a genuine choice. The campaign had remained calm, although at times some candidates had gone beyond acceptable limits in their rhetoric. No major irregularities had been reported on election day. Both the public and the private media had generally fulfilled their legal obligations and had been largely unbiased in their campaign coverage, enabling the voters to make an informed choice.

The weaknesses still marring the legislative framework stemmed from a number of ambiguous and contradictory provisions, a required 50 per cent turnout that could potentially lead to a series of repeat elections without any outcome, and the lack of election administration bodies serving as intermediaries between the Republican Election Commission and the local polling boards.

Following the second round of voting on 13 October, the ODIHR confirmed its earlier conclusions and urged the parliament to improve the Republic's electoral legislation ahead of the repeat vote, which had become necessary because of the insufficient turnout in the second round of voting. The ODIHR had suggested that before the repeat vote, the requirement of a 50 per cent turnout for the second round should be repealed, as the provision would promote a boycott by unsuccessful first-round candidates, undermine voter confidence and contradict the spirit of the Constitution. The ODIHR further warned that a series of unsuccessful attempts to elect a new president might also lead to a constitutional crisis.

The ODIHR's long-term election observation mission, led by Nikolai Vulchanov (Bulgaria), was composed of 28 election experts based in Belgrade and nine regional centres throughout the

Republic and in Kosovo. The ODIHR was joined by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe for the observation of the first round. More than 230 international observers monitored the first round, and over 110 the second round, of the elections.

The ODIHR will observe the repeat election on 8 December.

Latvia: parliamentary elections, 5 October

The ODIHR observed the parliamentary elections in Latvia. The post-election statement, issued on 6 October, concluded that the parliamentary elections had been conducted in accordance with international standards, although some issues needed to be addressed.

The international observers noted that the election had been marked by a healthy level of political pluralism and increased transparency. Voters and candidates had had a high degree of confidence in the election administration. In a positive step, the provisions requiring that candidates be proficient in the Latvian language had been removed from the electoral legislation in the run-up to the elections. However, the Election Law still restricted candidates based on their past political-party and security-services affiliations. Furthermore, the population included a large proportion of non-citizens who were excluded from participating in elections.

The observers said that the election administration should be credited for overseeing a smooth and successful election. However, the ODIHR had raised some questions concerning the role of police officers at polling stations and the need to ensure the secrecy of the ballot.

The international election observation mission was a joint effort between the ODIHR and the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly. The ODIHR long-term election observation mission, headed by Gerald Mitchell (United



Kingdom/United States), was composed of six observers in Riga and another six in three regions. The mission did not observe polling stations on election day.

Montenegro: early parliamentary elections, 20 October

The ODIHR's election observation mission concluded that the elections had, on the whole, been conducted in accordance with international standards. Overall, the assessment of the electoral process was positive. However, the international observers noted the persistent shortcomings in the legal framework and highlighted new additional concerns. The ODIHR noted the deepening of the political divide that had become apparent during the debate on changes to the election legislation in the Republic of Montenegro. The mission recommended that undemocratic provisions allowing political parties to control electoral mandates should be changed without delay.

The international observers noted that the elections had been marked by a broad participation of political parties and coalitions, a generally calm campaign and adequate representation by

political parties on election commissions at all levels. While coverage of the campaign by the State media had been more balanced than in previous elections, the privately owned media had largely failed to provide unbiased reporting.

The ODIHR long-term election observation mission, headed by Nikolai Vulchanov (Bulgaria), was composed of 19 election experts and long-term observers based in Podgorica and four regional centres. For the observation on election day, the ODIHR was joined by the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly. More than 110 short-term observers were deployed to monitor the polls on election day.

Armenia: local elections, 20 October

Two experts from the ODIHR supported the OSCE Office in Yerevan in conducting a political assessment of the elections to local self-government bodies.

ODIHR helps develop new international election standards

An ODIHR delegation, headed by Deputy Director Steven Wagenseil, took part in the Annual Conference of the

Association of Central and Eastern European Election Officials (ACEEEO) in Moscow from 26 to 28 September. The conference developed and approved a draft convention on election standards, electoral rights and freedoms which will be presented to international organizations for further discussion.

Hrair Balian, Head of the ODIHR's Election Section, praised the initiative and thanked the drafting committee for taking into account the extensive com-

ments by the ODIHR.

At the opening ceremony, Russian President Vladimir Putin welcomed the move to develop international standards and commitments relating to democratic elections. The event was hosted by the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation.

The ODIHR and the ACEEEO signed a co-operation agreement.

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UPDATE

HIGH COMMISSIONER ON NATIONAL MINORITIES

SEE University



Quality education: the South East European University opened its doors on 20 November 2001

Assurances received on minority protection in Serbia and Montenegro

In a letter to Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in late August, the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), Rolf Ekeus, expressed his hope that minority rights would find an appropriate place in the Constitutional Charter of the Union of Serbia and Montenegro. Mr. Ekeus noted with satisfaction the significant improvement in inter-ethnic relations in the FRY in the past two years, manifested, in part, by the adoption of a Federal Law on the Protection of National Minorities in February 2002. But he emphasized that, under the Union's new arrangement, "it is necessary to ensure that the standards of minority protection achieved in the Federal Law would not be jeopardized".

Mr. Ekeus received a reply from Foreign Minister Svilanovic on 30

September, assuring him that "in the current draft of the Constitutional Charter, it is envisaged that national minority rights in the redefined Union of Serbia and Montenegro may not be lesser than those already existing in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia". He noted that in his capacity as Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs and as a participant in the process of redefinition of the relations between Serbia and Montenegro, "I strive for the Constitutional Charter which firmly incorporates guarantees for the respect of minority rights."

The existing Federal Law continues to be implemented. On 21 September, the High Commissioner's office was represented at the official opening of the Constituent Assembly of the Hungarian National Council in Subotica. Such councils aim to make possible national-cultural autonomy for recognized minorities within the FRY.

South Eastern European University continues expansion

The South Eastern European University in Tetovo (SEE), which was initiated as a project by the HCNM in 2000 and built with the generous support of the international community in less than a year, began its second academic year on 1 October. The university has proved immensely popular with young people in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The student population of some 2,200 reflects a doubling in enrollment within one year. New lecture halls and dormitories are being built to accommodate anticipated expansion.

The idea behind the university was to provide Albanian speakers in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with opportunities for higher education in their mother tongue. The curriculum is, however, multilingual and the number of non-Albanian speakers is steadily increasing. In line with its mandate to offer a quality education, the university continues to recruit local and international staff of high standing and to intensify its co-operation with other academic institutions around the world. SEE and the University of Indiana enjoy close ties, for example.

High Commissioner Rolf Ekeus visited the campus on 22 September and took part in the university's board meeting. He was on a two-day visit in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to familiarize himself with post-election developments and to hold discussions with international officials on the possible further involvement of the HCNM in improving inter-ethnic relations in the country.

Limited progress seen in Croatia's Minority Law

The High Commissioner visited Croatia from 23 to 25 September to discuss the draft Constitutional Law on National Minorities. Over the past year,

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the High Commissioner has provided a number of comments on drafts of the law. Discussion on the law is currently stalled on a number of points, including minority representation in parliament.

In meetings with members of the Government and the opposition as well as representatives of minorities and the international diplomatic corps, the High Commissioner stressed the need for the law to provide adequate minority representation at the national level to strengthen the capabilities and powers of minority self-government at both the local and the regional levels, to strengthen the capabilities and composition of the Council of National Minorities and to liberalize the definition of a 'national minority'.

In talks with Deputy Prime Minister Goran Granic, Foreign Minister Tonino Picula, President Stipe Mesic and other Government officials, the High Commissioner emphasized the importance he attached to the adoption of a Constitutional Law that adequately protects the rights of national minorities. He also highlighted the need for further steps to protect minorities and integrate the diverse ethnic groups in Croatia.

Ekeus reviews minority issues in OSCE area

The High Commissioner addressed the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Review Meeting in Warsaw on 9 September, reviewing some of the issues he has been dealing with over the past year and looking ahead to future challenges.

He spoke on integration, combating anti-discrimination and the responsibility of the State to protect national minorities, among other issues. He also noted that future priorities could include combating extremism and addressing issues involving minorities and the media.

Ekeus calls for swift amendment of Hungarian "Status" Law

In October, Rolf Ekeus continued playing an active role in seeking a satisfactory resolution to the Act on Hungarians Living Abroad. Discussion of this contentious issue has been taking place

over the past 18 months, during which time Ambassador Ekeus visited Hungary, Slovakia and Romania several times, maintained high-level contacts with the main parties, including Hungarian representatives in neighbouring States, hosted expert-level discussions, and provided recommendations on how the Act can be brought in line with international standards.

On a visit to Budapest on 30 October, the High Commissioner stressed the need for amending the Act as soon as possible. He noted that neighbouring States and the international community had shown great patience regarding the amendment process, which now deserved to be rewarded. At meetings with Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs, experts on the Act and other Government representatives, Mr. Ekeus was given a copy of the draft amendments which are scheduled to be introduced in parliament in December. In early November, the High Commissioner provided the Foreign Minister with some observations on the draft amendments and on the process of resolving outstanding differences with neighbouring States.

In Hungary, the High Commissioner was also informed about proposed anti-discrimination legislation and efforts to ensure minority representation in parliament. He offered his assistance to the Hungarian Government on both matters.

The High Commissioner proceeded to Bratislava on 30 October. He was received by Prime Minister Miklos Dzurinda, who expressed his Government's dissatisfaction with the slow pace of the amendment process and reiterated the Slovak Government's specific reservations regarding the Act.

High Commissioner speaks up on minority issues in enlarged EU

The High Commissioner took part in a conference on national minorities in the enlarged European Union, which was hosted by the Danish Presidency of the EU on 5 November. "The European Union cannot ignore minority-related issues on its own turf," he cautioned in a speech. He noted that while the threat of violent conflicts would probably be reduced in an enlarged Europe, "other

inter-ethnic issues of governance will persist, possibly becoming more complex". He said that now was the time to start thinking about this challenge, especially in the context of the ongoing dialogue on the future of the EU.

Mr. Ekeus called on participants in the European Convention to reflect on EU standards for protecting national minorities. While recognizing the importance of the Copenhagen criteria for ensuring respect and protection of minorities in accession countries, he said that the standards were less clear for EU members. "Surely the standards on which the Copenhagen criteria are based should be universally applicable within and throughout the EU, in which case they should be equally – and consistently – applied to all Member States," he said.

The High Commissioner noted that an imbalance in applicable standards within the Union would be "inconsistent with declared EU values and raise serious doubts about the normative foundations of the EU itself". He stressed the importance of legislation to counter discrimination and the protection of minority languages.

Mr. Ekeus concluded that "integrating diversity is and will remain one of the greatest challenges for the EU. If we fail to act responsibly, that diversity could be a source of tension within our cities and States and across borders – and so the European project will be jeopardized". He was confident that this could be avoided, while building both a larger and a better European Union.

Inter-ethnic issues discussed in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan

The High Commissioner visited Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan from 21 to 25 October. In Bishkek, he discussed inter-ethnic issues with President Askar Akaev, Foreign Minister Askar Aitmatov, the speaker of parliament, and representatives of the Assembly of People of Kyrgyzstan. He was particularly interested in the process of constitutional reform that was under way in Kyrgyzstan and its impact on minority participation and the protection of minority rights. The High Commissioner was also briefed on the situation of the Kyrgyz minorities in

Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

The High Commissioner travelled on to the ethnically diverse region of Osh in southern Kyrgyzstan, paying particular attention to issues affecting the region's sizeable Uzbek minority. His meetings with Uzbek representatives and local authorities focused on minority language use, education and participation in public life.

In Tashkent, Uzbekistan, the High Commissioner had meetings with the foreign minister, the speaker of parliament, the ombudsman and local ambassadors.

The situation of Uzbek minorities living in neighbouring countries, especially in Turkmenistan, was one of the main topics of discussion between the High Commissioner and senior Uzbek authorities.

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HCNM ONLINE INFORMATION EXPANDED

The section on the High Commissioner on National Minorities on the OSCE web site has recently been updated. The bibliography of books, articles and press clippings on the HCNM has been revised. The Hague, Oslo and Lund Recommendations on education rights, language rights and participation have been translated into as many as 15 languages and are available online under the Recommendations section. For up-to-date information on the work of the High Commissioner, including speeches and documents, please access:

<http://www.osce.org/hcnm>

UPDATE

OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

Democracy in Mediterranean is theme of PA conference

More than 200 parliamentarians from 45 OSCE participating States took part in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's conference on the Mediterranean, held on 3 and 4 October in Madrid. The conference, organized at the invitation of the Spanish parliament, featured a series

of presentations and discussions on ensuring peace, democracy and prosperity in the Mediterranean.

The parliamentarians were welcomed by Bruce George, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA) and Chairperson of the Conference; Luisa Fernanda Rudi Ubeda, Speaker of the Spanish Chamber of

Deputies; and Prada Presa, First Vice-President of the Spanish Senate. Among the speakers were OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubis; Peter Schatzler, Director of the Department of External Relations, International Organization for Migration; and Stefano Silvestri, President of the *Istituto Internazionali*.



The Speaker of Spain's Chamber of Deputies, Luisa Fernanda Rudi Ubeda, welcomes parliamentarians to PA conference

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Closing the conference, PA President Bruce George stressed the complexity of the problems discussed and called for a holistic approach to finding solutions. "We are all, in a sense, Mediterranean," he said, referring to the solidarity demonstrated by the parliamentarians.

The PA President said he hoped that the conference had served as a model that would pave the way for annual Mediterranean forums in the future. He warmly welcomed the proposal of the Italian delegation that a full day of the OSCE PA Autumn Conference in 2003 be devoted to Mediterranean issues; arrangements for it were already under way. He pledged to continue working actively to enhance the dialogue on Mediterranean issues and to encourage action by the intergovernmental side of the OSCE.

OSCE SG briefs Standing Committee on proposed budget

At the meeting of the PA Standing Committee in Madrid on 2 October, OSCE Secretary General Jan Kubis briefed the OSCE PA on the Organization's proposed budget for 2003 and took questions from the floor. According to the Secretary General, the briefing – the first event of its kind in the Assembly – was an excellent outcome of the work of the PA's Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency and Accountability.

Mr. Kubis emphasized that the proposed OSCE budget was being distributed simultaneously to the OSCE participating States and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

PA President George meets with Chairman-in-Office

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Bruce George visited Lisbon on 8 October at the invitation of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office (CiO), Portuguese Foreign Minister Antonio Mar-

tins da Cruz. The aim was to strengthen co-operation between the Parliamentary Assembly and the OSCE Chairmanship. PA Secretary General Spencer Oliver also participated in the meetings.

The officials discussed the Organization's strategy for dealing with the new threats to security and stability, election observation, the Ministerial Council Meeting to take place in Porto, and other matters.

They reaffirmed the shared objective of enhancing co-operation between the Parliamentary Assembly and the OSCE institutions and structures. Related to this issue, PA President George informed the CiO that the Parliamentary Assembly would soon open an office in Vienna, headed by Ambassador Andreas Nothelle, a former senior official of the German *Bundestag*, who had had extensive experience in OSCE PA work. It was further emphasized and agreed that the OSCE PA should continue to have access to the working meetings of the OSCE in Vienna.

Mr. George also held meetings in Lisbon with the speaker of the Portuguese parliament, Joao Bosco Mota Amaral, and with the Portuguese delegation to the OSCE PA, led by Eduarda Azevedo. The Portuguese parliament would host the meeting of the OSCE PA's Bureau in Porto on 5 December, just before the OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting.

The PA President briefed Portuguese parliamentarians on current activities of the Parliamentary Assembly and thanked them for their continuing support.

President George also took part in the opening of the Seminar on Security in the Western Mediterranean, which had been organized by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Western European Union (WEU). During his visit to Lisbon, President Bruce George was accompanied by Presidential Adviser Gustavo Pallares.

Parliamentary Troika hosts Stability Pact Conference

More than 150 delegates from the OSCE PA, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the European Parliament and parliaments in south-eastern Europe, as well as other representatives, participated in the third Conference of the Parliamentary Troika of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. It was held in Tirana, Albania, from 14 to 16 October, at the invitation of the Council of Europe, which holds the current chairmanship of the Troika, and the Albanian parliament.

Under the theme, 'Enhancing security and political stability through economic co-operation', the delegations discussed infrastructure projects, the fight against crime and corruption, and the progress on trade and free movement of people.

The President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Peter Schieder (Austria), urged the participants to focus not only on the effects of corruption, but also on its roots. The Troika commended the negotiation of numerous free trade agreements in the region and urged the continuation of the process.

The conference reached the conclusion that enormous progress had been achieved in the region during the past year. However, there was still work to be done, in which parliamentarians had an important part to play. The delegates emphasized that the integration of the countries of south-eastern Europe into the European Union and the Euro-Atlantic community as a whole remained the overriding objective.

Representatives of the OSCE PA included Vice-Presidents Ahmet Tan (Turkey) and Rita Süßmuth (Germany), as well as the Chairperson of the Third Committee, Elena Mizulina (Russia).

The conference adopted the Tirana Declaration, which can be accessed at www.osce.org/pa.

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OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy to be given more visibility

The ceremony awarding the annual OSCE Prize for Journalism and Democracy will now take place at the Winter Meetings of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Vienna, which in 2003 have been scheduled for 20 and 21 February. This was decided at the meeting of the Standing Committee of the OSCE PA in Madrid, with the adoption of a proposal by the PA International Secretariat for changing the existing procedures. Traditionally, the award ceremony had taken place at the PA's Annual Session in July.

PA President Bruce George said that the change would result in greater visibility for the Prize. Established in 1996, the award recognizes journalists' efforts to promote OSCE principles relating to human rights, democracy and the free flow of information.

December 1 is the deadline for the submission of nominees. The PA Bureau will discuss the nominations at its meeting in December; the Prize Committee will propose the winner to the Bureau in January; and the Bureau will decide on the winner at the end of January or in early February.



UPDATE

REPRESENTATIVE ON FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA

Central Asian conference examines media situation

The Fourth Central Asian Media Conference, organized by the Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFOM) on 26 and 27 September in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, served as a forum for interaction among some 100 journalists in the region. The OSCE Representative, Freimut Duve, will submit project proposals to potential donors to tap opportunities for co-operation.

The frank exchange revealed the serious situation of the media, with numerous examples being presented. "In the Central Asian countries – all of them being participating States of the OSCE community, which describes itself as a family of democracies – the tendency towards oppression is very clear," said Mr. Duve in his opening remarks. "My Office has dealt with many cases of media harassment in the region. I do not expect the situation to change dramatically for the better in the nearest future."

The state of affairs in Turkmenistan – one of practically total control – remained the most alarming. The situation had continued to deteriorate: foreign newspapers had not been delivered to subscribers since mid-July, and television transmissions had been shut down.

Amid the setbacks, there were some positive developments. Most notably, criminal charges against Tajik journalist Dodojon Atovulloev had been dropped; licences had been issued to three independent radio stations in Dushanbe, Tajikistan; and official censorship in Uzbekistan had been banned.

"However, I encourage the five Central Asian States to do more – much more – to ensure that they are fully in line with relevant OSCE commitments their governments have signed on to," Mr. Duve said at the conference.

The first task was to guarantee the physical safety of journalists who were being harassed and attacked in the region with frightening frequency, the OSCE

Representative said. A recent case involved the beating of Sergei Duvanov, a journalist from Kazakhstan, just before his departure for the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw. Fortunately, Mr. Duvanov made it to the meeting in Warsaw and also to the conference in Tashkent.

Focusing on corruption, the theme of the conference, the sessions examined problems faced by journalists in writing about cases of corruption and discussed measures to improve investigative reporting. Participants agreed that corruption was a growing menace, both in the East and in the West, and that the media's watchdog function was indispensable.

The journalists adopted the Tashkent Declaration on Freedom of the Media and Corruption. They also confirmed the findings of the media reports issued by the OSCE Representative on the five Central Asian States. Each report sets out recommendations on what the Government can do to improve the situation.



Developments in Central Asia's media scene were discussed in Tashkent

Review of Ukraine's media-related legislation continues

The Representative on Freedom of the Media, together with the Council of Europe, the *Verhovna Rada* (Ukrainian parliament) and Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reviewed two media-related laws at a seminar on 24 September. The OSCE Representative has carried out several legal reviews on the subject outlin-

ing specific recommendations, which have yet to be taken up by legislators.

Moldova's new law on public broadcasting causes concern

Two advisers from the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFOM) went to Moldova in early September to assess recent trends in the country's otherwise relatively free media climate.

Both the Council of Europe and the OSCE Representative are concerned that the newly adopted law on transforming the state company *Teleradio Moldova* into a public broadcaster leaves scope for political influence over editorial policy. However, several parliamentarians have stated that they would look into amending the provisions regulating the appointment of the broadcaster's Administrative Council, which is of specific concern to Freimut Duve.

Journalists share experiences in reporting from conflict areas

The subject of journalists in conflict areas was the focus of a side event held by the RFOM at the ODHR's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting on 12 September in Warsaw. Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya and German reporter Dirk Zager shared their experiences in Chechnya and Afghanistan and the difficulties and hazards they have encountered while working in war zones.

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UPDATE

SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE SECRETARIAT

SG addresses conference on Bratislava Process

At the invitation of Slovakia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Eduard Kukan, Secretary General Jan Kubis addressed a conference in Bratislava on 2 September focusing on the official conclusion of the Bratislava Process. Aimed at supporting democratic changes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), the process was initiated in 1999 by the East-West Institute, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic and representatives of pro-democracy forces in the FRY. The OSCE and the Council of Europe are among the international partners of the initiative.

President of OSCE PA meets members of OSCE Secretariat

At their meeting on 4 September in Vienna, the Secretary General and Bruce George, the new President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA), reaffirmed their intention to co-operate closely in activities dealing with

preventing and combating terrorism, the Organization's economic dimension and Central Asia. The PA President was in Vienna to address the Permanent Council and meet members of the Secretariat.

Executive Secretary of UNECE visits OSCE

Secretary General Jan Kubis and Marcin Swiecicki, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, met the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Brigita Schmognerova, on 5 September to discuss joint concerns and activities. The Secretary General stressed the importance of OSCE's support for the OSCE's activities addressing the economic and environmental dimension. Both officials agreed that co-ordination meetings were highly beneficial and should be repeated at the working level as often as possible.

Responding to the Secretary Gen-

eral's invitation to the UNECE to contribute to the meeting of the OSCE Economic and Environmental Subcommittee of the Permanent Council on 20 September, the UNECE presented a paper entitled, "Proposal on formulating new commitments under the OSCE economic dimension". The UNECE also contributed a paper on "The role of economic disparities between States as a threat to security" to the meeting of the Subcommittee on 25 October.

Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan in talks with SG

The Secretary General and the Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan, K. Tokaev, exchanged views on 10 September on security-related matters in Central Asia and Afghanistan, including prospects for various regional arrangements. They discussed recent political developments in Kazakhstan and its continuing co-operation with the OSCE. The Foreign Minister was in Vienna to address a special ses-

sion of the Permanent Council on 11 September.

SG addresses graduates of human rights programme

The Secretary General was in Venice on 15 September to address the graduation ceremony for students in the European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratization. The programme, launched in 1997 by the European Union, is co-ordinated by the University of Padua.

OSCE co-operation with EC and EU discussed in Brussels

The Secretary General addressed the European Conference on "Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings – A Global Challenge for the 21st Century" in Brussels. The event was organized by the International Organization for Migration in co-operation with the European Union from 18 to 20 September.

Ambassador Kubis took the opportunity to hold consultations with representatives of the European Commission (EC): Fernando Valenzuela, Deputy Director General for External Relations; Daniele Smadja, Director for Multilateral Relations, Directorate for External Relations; and Marc Franco, Deputy Director-General of EuropeAid. They discussed improving co-operation between the OSCE Secretariat and the EC, including in the field, and how the EC can respond more quickly in support of the OSCE.

SG visits Warsaw

After attending the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw on 19 September, the Secretary General met with the Foreign Minister of Poland, Wladzimirz Cimoszewicz, with whom he discussed the Organization's reform efforts and OSCE-Polish co-operation.

Secretary General meets Spanish officials

While in Madrid to address the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly conference on the Mediterranean, the Secretary General took the opportunity to hold

bilateral meetings with officials at the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The discussions focused on the reforms and future role of the Organization. Relations between the OSCE and the European Union, and between the OSCE and Spain were also discussed.

The Secretary General was received on 4 October by the Secretary of State for European Affairs, Ramon de Miguel, who was joined by the Head of the Ministry's OSCE department, Maria Victoria Scola, and the Head of the Permanent Mission of Spain to the OSCE, Ambassador Joaquin Perez-Gomez.

The meeting was followed by a working lunch hosted by the Director General for Europe, Ricardo Diez-Hochleitner.

Talks held on France-OSCE co-operation

The Secretary General held bilateral consultations with French officials on 10 and 11 October. He met the State Secretary at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Renaud Muselier, with whom he discussed the OSCE's activities in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and the Organization's co-operation with other international partners. The State Secretary expressed France's support and appreciation for the Organization's role as a forum for political dialogue, and for its contribution to the increased stability and rule of law in the two regions.

His discussions with Stanislas Lefebvre de Laboulaye, Political Director of the Foreign Ministry, focused on the role of the international community in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Issues dealing with policing and co-operation between the OSCE and the European Union were also raised.

The Secretary General also met Serge Degallaix, Diplomatic Adviser to the French Prime Minister.



Ambassador Brendan Moran met Secretary General Jan Kubis on 7 October, his first day as Head of Delegation of Ireland

SG addresses "Partners in Peace" conference

The Secretary General took part in a conference in Paris on 11 and 13 October, which was co-chaired by the International Peace Academy, the European Union Institute for Security Studies and the Directorate for Strategic Affairs of the French Ministry of Defence.

He delivered a keynote address, along with NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson; United Nations Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guehenno; and Robert Cooper, Director General for External and Politico-Military Affairs, Council of the European Union.

The participants highlighted the need for the OSCE to transfer its knowledge and experience to other regions, especially Asia and Africa.

Stability Pact and OSCE examine migration issues

Co-operation on migration issues was the subject of discussions on 16 October between the Secretary General and Soren Jessen-Petersen, Chairman of the Steering Committee of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, who is responsible for matters dealing with displacement and returns, as well as with Claudia Kurschat, acting Head of the Stability Pact's Migration and Asylum Initiative Support Unit.

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- OSCE Chairmanship committed to talks with Belarus (8 November 2002) [full text](#)
- OSCE Chairman-in-Office completes Central Asia visit in Turkmenistan (3 November 2002) [full text](#)
- OSCE report: terrorism high on agenda of OSCE visit to Kazakhstan (11 October 2002) [full text](#)

Documents

- AC/HR/02/000-10/11 for HR/02 [English](#) [FR](#)

PHOTO GALLERY

The virtue of the meeting is the matter de l'histoire de Porto, São José da ARRÓDIA, PORT.

[Images of the event](#)

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